

and others in the Office of Legal Counsel were directed to produce. He is certainly not responsible for the administration's drone policy or the decision to authorize an attack. He is a lawyer who was asked to do legal analysis for his client, the President of the United States.

Entangling David Barron's nomination with the policy of drone deployment is unfair to him and unfair to the people of Massachusetts, Maine, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Puerto Rico who need the vacancy on the First Circuit filled by someone as qualified as David Barron.

I believe David Barron will be an excellent judge, and that is why he has my support.

WRRDA CONFERENCE REPORT

Mr. MARKEY. Madam President, I commend the Senate on taking final action on the Water Resources Reform and Development Act, known as WRRDA. Today's bill includes the \$310 million Boston Harbor dredging project which will deepen Boston Harbor's main navigation channels.

Boston Harbor is an economic anchor for the entire New England region, and this investment will help ensure its future as a port of world class distinction. Improving the harbor to accommodate more and larger ships will bring more jobs, more investments, and more economic activity to the harbor, extending Boston's position as a shining city upon a hill as well as on the shore.

Dredging the harbor will double the number of containers on ships coming into Boston. The project will also allow the port to accommodate ships being built to serve the expanded Panama Canal, which is planned to open next year.

The Army Corps projects that for every dollar spent on construction, there will be \$9 returned in increased economic activity, resulting in a \$2.7 billion economic benefit for the entire New England region.

I thank Chairman BOXER and Ranking Member VITTER for their hard work getting this bill over the finish line. I also thank Senator WARREN and Congressman CAPUANO, Congressman LYNCH, and the entire Massachusetts congressional delegation for their leadership and commitment in securing this vital funding.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nevada.

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask the courtesy of the Senator from Nevada to do a brief unanimous consent request.

Mr. HELLER. Madam President, that is fine with me.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—H.R. 3080

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that following the

vote on H.R. 3080, the WRRDA legislation, the Senate proceed to the consideration of Executive Calendar No. 638, the Frank nomination, and vote on confirmation thereof; further, that there be 2 minutes for debate prior to the vote, equally divided in the usual form; further, that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, with no intervening action of debate; that no further motions be in order to the nomination; that any statements related to the nomination be printed in the RECORD; that President Obama be immediately notified of the Senate's action and the Senate resume legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REID. Madam President, with this agreement, at 1:45 p.m., there could be as many as three rolcall votes; however, we expect only two rolcall votes.

I appreciate again the courtesy of my friend from Nevada.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nevada.

VETERANS HEALTH CARE

Mr. HELLER. Madam President, on Monday, May 26, our Nation will pause to remember all those who paid the ultimate price while serving in the U.S. Armed Forces. It is a solemn day on which we recognize these brave heroes for their valor, their courage, and their commitment to our country.

As we honor and remember those who died fighting for our freedom, Congress must also remember we still have a promise to fulfill to the veterans who thankfully returned home—many with visible and invisible wounds of war. Our Nation has a proud history of caring for its wounded and disabled servicemembers and their families.

When these men and women volunteered their service, the United States guaranteed they would be cared for. As a member of the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee, I believe that promise has not been kept.

It is no secret the Department of Veterans Affairs is facing a significant challenge with accountability at all levels of their agency. This failure of responsibility has an impact on the hundreds of thousands of veterans in my home State of Nevada.

Last month I was honored to have a number of veterans join me for a roundtable in Las Vegas. This was an opportunity for me to listen and hear their concerns. By far, nearly every veteran in attendance expressed frustrations with the VA's claims backlog and the health care they are receiving. These veterans told me they feel discouraged and hopeless, that the VA does not and will not keep its promise.

They told me about the negative impact delays in benefits and care have on veterans and their families. Such comments should come as no surprise

given the difficulties Nevada veterans are facing. Look no further than the problem of the claims backlog here in Nevada.

Although the Secretary of the VA promised there would be changes to address this problem, Nevada veterans are still waiting the longest in the Nation—up to 352 days on average—for their disability benefits claims to be processed. This is nearly three times the VA's deadline of 125 days to complete a claim.

These issues in Nevada and the allegations raised across the country are causing veterans to lose faith in the VA, and I have raised all these concerns to the Secretary in a letter I sent 2 weeks ago. I asked for immediate answers about the lack of accountability on the local level and whether VA leadership finally plans to do something about it. Although I requested a response by Wednesday, May 21, the VA still has not responded. What these problems ultimately amount to is a lack of accountability in the VA leadership.

When I questioned the Secretary at a Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee hearing last week, he agreed he was ultimately responsible for the problems with VA care and health benefits. Despite this admission and admitting that veterans are not receiving the care they were promised, he said he does not plan to resign. So my question is: If the Secretary does not plan to resign, who is held accountable in the VA?

The VA has been given enough chances to change and do better, but these were empty promises that have not produced any results. It is now up to Members of Congress to take action. That is why I have already taken a number of steps to exert oversight, demand transparency, and develop solutions to the problems facing the VA.

During last week's hearing I asked the Secretary for assurances that the audits being conducted by the VA at its medical facilities would include all of Nevada's hospitals and clinics and the results would be shared with me and the rest of our delegation. As promised by the Secretary, I look forward to receiving these results as soon as possible, and I expect substantive immediate action should Nevada have any reports of mistreatment or delayed care of veterans.

I also visited again with Las Vegas hospital officials last Friday to ensure veterans at this facility are receiving the care they have earned and that the facility is properly handling its appointment waiting times.

It is critical that the Las Vegas VA hospital constantly work to improve its services and follows recommendations from the VA inspector general so that patients do not endure long waits—like the blind female VA veteran who waited for 5 hours before being seen in the emergency room.

I believe the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee should continue to exert